



EPA Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances

**How To Comply with the Worker Protection Standard
for Agricultural Pesticides: What Employers Need to Know
Who Needs to Read this Manual?**

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WHO NEEDS TO READ THIS MANUAL?

You probably need to comply with the WPS if you are a:

- **Manager or owner** of a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse, *or*
- **Labor contractor** for a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse, *or*
- **Custom (for-hire) pesticide applicator** or **independent crop consultant** hired by a farm, forest, nursery, or greenhouse operator.

Most WPS provisions are protections that you as an **employer** must provide to **your own employees** and, in some instances, to **yourself**. The WPS covers two types of employers, which it defines according to the type of work their employees do:

Worker employer — If you hire or contract for people to do agricultural worker tasks, or if you do them yourself, the WPS considers you a worker employer. In general, agricultural workers are persons who (1) do hand labor tasks, such as weeding, planting, cultivating, and harvesting, or (2) do other tasks involved in the production of agricultural plants, such as moving or operating irrigation equipment (see p. 10 for complete definition). Units 3 and 4 of this manual describe the WPS protections you must provide to the agricultural workers you employ.

Handler employer — If you hire people to do pesticide handling tasks, or if you do them yourself, the WPS considers you a handler employer. In general, pesticide handlers are persons who mix, load, apply, or do other tasks that bring them into direct contact with pesticides (see p. 10 for complete definition). You must provide WPS protections to all your pesticide handler employees, whether or not they are certified as applicators of restricted-use pesticides. Units 3 and 5 of this manual describe the WPS protections you must provide to the pesticide handlers you employ.

- *The same employee may be a worker at some times and a handler at other times, depending on the type of task being performed.*
- *You may be both a handler employer and a worker employer, depending on the tasks that you and your employees do.*
- *Both general-use pesticides and restricted-use pesticides are covered by the WPS.*